

da to study Chinese foreign strategy in an almost benign manner, particularly in terms of seabound transportation and trans-boundary pollutants.

Classifying *China's Arctic Ambitions* is a difficult task. Its authors and editors weave an optimistic perspective through the tapestry of analysis within the book. They pay something more than mere lip-service to the alarmist view vis-à-vis China's relationship with Canada, but it is not enough to ensure a realistic accounting of the tensions between the two nations. What was clearly needed was a member of the alarmist school of thought in the authors' circle to point out in more detail the dangers that the book fails to address or, more frequently, addresses too lightly. That having been said, *China's Arctic Ambitions* should be a core textbook in any class which addresses Canada and the Arctic, including regional North American and North Pacific topics. Despite failing to address alarmist perspectives to this reviewer's satisfaction, it remains a book well worth reading more than once, especially in light of current Canadian-Chinese relations.

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Ron Macdonald. *Deeper into the Darkness*. Dunbeath, Scotland: Whittles Publishing, www.whittlespublishing.com, 2018. xii+240 pp., illustrations, maps, tables, glossary. US \$25.95, UK £19.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-84995-360-3.

Wreck diving requires a flexible mind and imagination from the here and now to a time and place that once was. Surrounded by the sounds of the water, the diver enters a remarkable world. Depending on its environment, a wreck either remains as it was at the time of its

demise, or deteriorates as it is subjected to organisms, currents, divulging sands, and scrap-metal hunters.

In *Deeper into the Darkness*, the last in a diving trilogy, the author again tells stories about the maritime past, dividing his book in three parts. In the first, he discusses First World War wrecks around the United Kingdom. The second part focuses on the Pacific in the Second World War. Part 3 features the latest developments. The stories are accompanied by charts and photographs of various wrecks, as well as pictures taken during the action. As a bonus, QR Codes are inserted at a number of stories on wrecks and the dives. These allow the reader to go straight to the videos on You Tube and watch the dive on the wreck. Top-notch.

The author takes issue with the desecration of ship wrecks that are war graves such as those at Jutland from the First World War, and in the South China Sea and in the Java Sea from the Second World War.

The Battle of Jutland between the navies of the United Kingdom and Germany resulted in the loss of some 25 major warships. These wrecks constitute the graves of 8,648 sailors who perished. But they do not rest in peace. In the quest for scrap metal, salvage works have been carried out on 15 of these ships. In the South China Sea and the Java Sea, Second World War naval ships, like Britain's HMS *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* and several ships from the navy of the Netherlands have illegally disappeared into the furnace of commerce, without the slightest regard for the fact that the wrecks were considered war graves by the nations involved.

According to the author, each shipwreck, each cargo, each artefact lying on the bottom of the sea today still has a legal owner. Rights of ownership are not simply lost by abandonment.

On the other hand, the removal of the wrecks is a lost opportunity for divers to see the remnants of the past with their own eyes, and a note in their diver's log book.

Deeper into the Darkness is an excellent dive in the murky waters of history.

Jacob Bart Hak
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Ryan K. Noppen. *Osprey New Vanguard* #285. *The Royal Netherlands Navy of World War II*. Oxford, UK: Osprey Publishing, www.ospreypublishing.com, 2020. 48 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. UK £11.99, US \$19.00, CDN \$25.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-47288-4191-9.

The Royal Netherlands Navy (RNN) played a small part in naval activities during the Second World War—but from December 1941 to March 1942, its activities were very much in the news. In this new *Osprey* volume, Ryan K. Noppen continues his studies of lesser-known naval aspects of both world wars.

The Netherlands had once been a naval power but beginning with the Napoleonic Era and the consequent European peace, the Dutch government no longer felt the need for an expensive navy. Moreover, with the British navy just across the English Channel and Royal Navy bases at Singapore, maritime protection of both the Dutch homeland and the vital Dutch colonies of the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) could be left to the Royal Navy. At the end of the nineteenth century, two developments forced the Netherlands to rethink its position on naval strategy and strength.

The first was the Second Boer War of 1899-1902 wherein Dutch public

opinion favoured the Afrikaans-speaking South African Boers over the British. Perhaps the Royal Navy would not be the best maritime guardian of Dutch interests. At the same time, the rise of Imperial Japan in Asia—Japanese victories in the 1894-95 Sino-Japanese War, the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War, and Japan's limited participation in the First World War—meant that the Imperial Japanese Navy was becoming a potentially powerful naval adversary and a threat to the Dutch East Indies. The Netherlands managed to stay neutral during the conflagration that was the First World War, but no matter what happened in Europe, Japan was THE potential future foe.

Accordingly, the Netherlands began to rebuild its navy. A budget-minded Parliament, however, coupled with the Great Depression of the 1930s meant that any sizeable increase in naval strength was out of the question. The RNN staffs decided on a risk theory—send the main elements of the RNN to defend the Dutch East Indies, in hopes that the RNN in that area would be supported by the British Royal Navy and perhaps the US Navy as well. Depression restrictions meant the Dutch navy was unable to build any surface ships larger than a light cruiser—and not many of those. The RNN therefore entered the Second World War with four light cruisers in two classes—*De Ruyter*, *Java*, *Sumatra*, and *Tromp*. A fifth light cruiser, *Jacob van Heemskerck*, was commissioned on 10 May 1940, the day that Germany invaded the Netherlands. In addition, the RNN had eight destroyers in two classes, and a larger submarine force. Elements of the Netherlands Navy, including the incomplete *Jacob van Heemskerck*, sailed to Britain and continued to serve the Allies until the end of the European War in May, 1945.